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Arkansas Guard News

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EDITORIAL

Mission first, Family always Balance in our lives is critical to success

This past month I decided to take a couple weeks off from work. As a single man with only partial custody, I only get my daughter four weeks out of the summer, so this was my opportunity to spend some of that time with her.

Just like every other time I have taken off, I didn't completely set work aside while I was out of the office. Seems there is always something that has to be done that I end up carrying over into my time off. One task in particular that I had to complete this time was to come up with a topic for this particular page of our paper.

For my leave, my daughter and I had traveled to Gulfport, Miss., with family to see my little brother and his wife before she gave birth to their first child. This was also likely my last opportunity to enjoy such a trip with my daughter since she is now 18 and begins college this fall.

While we were there, I pulled out my computer in order to try and knock out my task. But as I tossed ideas back and forth on what my topic would be, I realized how I had allowed work to take away from time with my daughter. At that moment, I decided to turn off the computer and go out to enjoy the time I had with my child while I had the opportunity.

As I was putting up my laptop, the topic for my editorial hit me like a brick – the importance of balance between work and family. As always, my daughter was my inspiration.

We have been extremely busy in the Guard over the past decade. Keeping family close is difficult with the multiple mobilizations we have seen over the years. I have personally served on two deployments, which caused me to miss over two full years of my daughter's life. That's part of the sacrifice of wearing the uniform, which I fully understand and accept. Sadly, two deployments is actually a small number when compared to those serving in units such as Batesville whose troops are now potentially facing their fifth since 2001.

Keeping family close is difficult enough when faced with such challenges, but an extremely unhealthy balance is created when you allow yourself to become consumed in your work to the extent that it takes away from time with your family while you have the opportunity here at home.

All of our Soldiers and Airmen who take pride in our uniforms and our jobs, want to give all we can in order to do the best we can for our organization, our community, our state and our nation.

We are all doing important things, but we must remember to do so while maintaining a balance in our lives and ensuring that we dedicate time to our Families.

I recall President Bill Clinton speaking about a moon rock that was on his desk while he served in the oval office. The rock had been carbon dated at 3.6 billion years old. When

people came into his office stressed out over the hot issues of the moment, he would stop the conversation to point at the rock and say "You see that rock? It's 3.6 billion years old. We're just passing through. Calm down."

The point is what each of us is doing is important to the organization and success comes to the organization as we collectively accomplish these tasks. But today will pass. Tomorrow brings another mission for other Soldiers and Airmen. Each of us will move on from the organization at some point, but if we ensure to take time to care for Family and do our part to make the Family a success, we will truly achieve success in our lives.

Wearing the uniform is an extremely honorable job, but as stated by George Bernard Shaw, "Perhaps the greatest social service that can be rendered by



Capt. Chris J. Heathscott

anybody to this country and to mankind is to bring up a Family."

And you can't bring up a

Family if you don't take the time to be there for them.

Mission first. Family Always.

ON THE COVER



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Darren Pool, 39th IBCT

THE END OF AN ERA. Members of the 1st Battalion, 206th Field Artillery, 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, send a shell down range from an M102 towed howitzer during a live fire exercise at Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center. The unit's M102s are being retired and were fired for the last time June 19 during a battalion change of command. The unit is slated to receive the M119A2 towed howitzer later in the year.